

CHAPTER IX.

LITERATURE.

No account of literary activity in the State can be considered comprehensive unless it took note of the works that its people produced in Sāṁskrit, Prākṛit, Kannada and other languages which are or were for long cultivated in it. From what follows, it will be seen that the output in Sāṁskrit has not by any means been negligible in the State, while the little that is now known of the works produced in Prākṛit, leads us to infer that there should have been a great deal more produced in that language before Sāṁskrit re-asserted itself and Kannada attained the upper hand as a literary tongue. The predominance of Kannada in later ages was due primarily to its being the dominant spoken language in the State. It was cultivated assiduously both by Jains and Brāhmins, who further popularized it by issuing translations or independent versions of the more notable Sāṁskrit works, including the epic poems. The fact that Kannada writers were often deeply read in Sāṁskrit enabled them not only to produce works in both languages but also to enrich the Kannada language, which, in their hands, got saturated with Sāṁskrit words. Grierson, indeed, has remarked that Kannada literature is largely made up of translations from Sāṁskrit. In this chapter, literature will be considered under the following heads :—

Literary
progress
in the State.

- I. Sāṁskrit Literature.
- II. Prākṛit Literature.
- III. Kannada Literature.
- IV. Telugu Literature.
- V. Tamil Literature.
- VI. Persian and Urdu Literature.